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ABSTRACT

Students who honestly try the SQ3R (Survey, Question, Read, Review, Recite) approach to studying almost universally find it successful. Students should first set a time and a place for their study. When reading a chapter, students should: (1) survey chapter titles, headings, illustrations, etc.; (2) figure out what the chapter is really concerned with and what the teacher will expect them to know; (3) read the chapter; (4) recall other related items as they read and anticipate what will come next; and (5) recite to themselves what they think the author is trying to get at. Using a divided page technique for taking notes can also help retain essential information. (RS)

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The SQ3R

Reading Formula

Really Works

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AVKO "Great Idea"
Reprint Series #626

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THE SQ3R
READING FORMULA
REALLY WORKS

By

Don McCabe

AVKO Great Idea Reprint Series #626

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AVKO is a non-profit tax-exempt membership organization founded in 1974 that is:

- subsidized by donations and grants.
- open to membership to anyone interested in helping others learn to read and write.
- run by members from as far away as Hawaii and Quebec and whose daily operations are handled by volunteers.
- planning to build and operate a model reading research center in a YEAR-AROUND **camp** setting that would economically and efficiently service the needs of dyslexics of all ages.
- trying to spread the concept that parent and spouse tutoring in spelling/reading skills can be successfully taught in adult community education classes and that members of a problem reader's support group can greatly assist the efforts of any volunteer tutor working in the literacy movement.
- providing newsletters and economical opportunities to pursue individual research projects and to take part in large scale cooperative research projects that have immediate practical applications.
- attempting to accomplish these goals primarily through the profits generated by the inservices, workshops and the sale of materials developed for the special needs of students, parents, and adults – but AVKO still needs donations to survive.

The SQ3R Reading Formula Really Works

Perhaps the most common error by students in studying is the way they read an assignment. For example, when students come home from school, they quite commonly just throw their history books on the table and head straight for the refrigerator. Sound familiar?

They know they have a chapter to read, but they don't want to read it right away. So, instead, they procrastinate. They put it off until later, and too often the "later" never comes. Bet that sounds familiar, too.

If they eventually do get their book out and open it up, they do so, not because they want to, but because either their parents have reminded them or they feel like they just have to get the nasty business of reading the chapter done and out of the way. So, they open the book to the chapter and begin what they believe is reading.

Actually, what they are doing is simply pronouncing words mentally, in a deadly monotone, inside their heads. They begin with the first sentence and plod on to the last. When they have finished listening to themselves read, they can't remember what it is they have read. In fact, sometimes they never even finish because they have lulled themselves to sleep.

This, of course, is an absolute waste of time.

Students who don't like to waste their time and who want to be able to comprehend what it is they are reading must learn to approach their reading assignment differently.

First of all, they should set a time and a place for their study. This avoids the psychological block of having to do something distasteful. The reason is that once we start doing something out of HABIT, we just do it. We don't think about it. It's a habit. If we don't think about it and just do it, it's a lot easier.

Secondly, students should get into the habit of using what many reading experts call the SQ3R reading formula. Instead of starting with the first sentence and plowing on through to the end, students who are using SQ3R begin by using the **S** in **S**Q3R which stands for survey as in:

SURVEY
QUESTION
READ **R**EVIEW **R**ECITE

Students should look at the chapter title, the headings, the pictures, graphs, etc. Students should even look at the questions at the end. This is just SURVEYING. This is looking over what it is they are supposed to learn.

All the time that they are ***SURVEYING*** the chapter, their minds should be actively involved. They should be trying to figure out what the chapter is really concerned with and what it is that the teacher will expect them to know and how it might relate to things they have already learned. This, of course, is the ***QUESTION*** step. In today's academic jargon it would be called establishing a general schema for a specific reading.

Then, after the students have previewed or ***SURVEYED*** the chapter and have certain ***QUESTIONS*** in mind that need answering, they begin to ***READ***.

REMEMBER: ***SQ3R*** ***S*** = ***SURVEY***
Q = ***QUESTION***
R #1 = ***READ***

As students ***READ*** the chapter, their minds should be active. They should let their mind recall other related items. In fact, it is a form of ***REVIEW***ing related material -- or in today's jargon, it is activating relevant schemata.

As they read, students should also try to anticipate what will be coming next. When they come to the end of sections within the chapter, the serious students will ***RECITE*** (***R#3*** of ***SQ3R***) to themselves what they think the author is trying to get at, what they think is important to remember, and what it is they still don't understand or -equally important -- don't agree with.

Good readers don't just nod their heads yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, until they fall asleep. Good readers think while they are reading. Good readers question. Good readers ask themselves while they are reading:

Is that really so?
Is that really a fact?
Or is that merely the author's opinion?
Is that the opinion of most experts?

Students who honestly try the ***SQ3R*** approach to studying almost universally find it successful. (Fact? Opinion? Would quoting one, two, or three studies make a difference?) So, why don't you stop boring yourself when you're studying. Instead of just listening to that voice inside your skull calling out words when you pick up your history book, why don't you, just once, follow the ***SQ3R*** formula by ***Survey***ing ***Question***ing ***Read***ing ***Review***ing ***Reciting***.

You will be glad you did.

Divided Page Technique for Notes

Names or Dates	Famous for?

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